

Message from the Chief

Chief's Memo – May 15, 2007

CAL FIRE Conducts ICT Training and Statewide Managers Meeting, Enjoys Successful Wildfire Awareness Week Campaign, Early Season Fires Strike Southern California

Last week all ten Incident Command Teams (ICT) met for training and coordination in Sacramento at the Red Lion Inn. The CAL FIRE Management Team reinstated Team 9, which was eliminated last year due to vacancies in leadership positions. The two-day training session focused on preparation for what is shaping up to be a very challenging fire season.



During Wildfire Awareness Week CAL FIRE personnel educated the public at several venues statewide on the hazards and preventative measures associated with wildfires. The public's need to provide "100' of defensible space" to "help us help them" was a common theme. Department staff also discussed the diversity of what we do as an organization by rolling out our "CAL FIRE" emblem and evolution of the broader CAL FIRE mission.



In Sacramento, Secretary Chrisman was on-hand, along with the "Branding Committee" co-chairs, Dave Titus and Chief Bill Holmes, to unveil the new CAL FIRE emblem. Assembly Members Kevin Jeffries and Tom Berryhill were present for the ceremony. Assembly Member Doug LaMalfa was also present,

as were State Fire Marshal Kate Dargan, former State Fire Marshal Ronny Coleman, and Executive Director of the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection, George Gentry (not in photos).



On May 9th, new Fresno-Kings Unit Chief, Keith Larkin, spoke to the media about “Wildfire Awareness” at an event that drew members of the media and the public to their program in Fresno. FKU displayed apparatus and equipment displaying the new CAL FIRE emblem, as they discussed the mission of the department.



On Saturday, May 12th, at the Ryan Air Attack Base in Hemet, CAL FIRE/Riverside County Fire drew hundreds of people to “Wildfire Awareness” display booths, helicopter hoist rescue demonstrations, S2T and helicopter water drops, and a number of speeches on the scope of CAL FIRE’s mission.



Special thanks go to all the CAL FIRE personnel and Units, as well as our partners that participated in Wildfire Awareness Week presentations throughout the state. Events were also held in Cameron Park, Redding, and San Diego County during the week.



Last week most supervisors and managers participated in the Statewide Managers meeting and many also attended the Incident Command Team (ICT) training at the Red Lion Inn in Sacramento. I received positive feedback that both training sessions were very worthwhile and successful.

I spoke at the ICT training about my expectations of CAL FIRE supervisors and managers. That PowerPoint presentation can be downloaded as a PDF by clicking below!

- [Chief's Grijalva's Expectations of Supervisors and Managers](#) (84K PDF)

At the Statewide Managers training I spoke about my expectations with our Cooperative Fire Program and relationships with local government. That PowerPoint presentation can be downloaded by clicking below!

- [Chief Grijalva's Expectations of Local Government Partnerships](#) (584K PDF)

Wildfire Awareness Week ended several significant wildfires throughout the state. CAL FIRE hit the beaches of Catalina again this year. Working together with the US Navy, US Marines, California Air National Guard, LA County Fire, USFS, and other local government partners, approximately 732 firefighters, including 350 from CAL FIRE, assisted with the evacuation of 3800 people, and battled a 4,750 acre wildfire that resulted in one destroyed residence and six lost structures.



CAL FIRE firefighters, engines, dozers, fire crews, copters, air attack, air tankers, and support personnel all played a vital role in the successful outcome. I spoke with Fire Chief P. Michael Freeman, our Contract County partner from LA County. He was very appreciative of our assistance and leadership.



Congratulations to battalion chief Jon Mills who arrived at Avalon as a captain and left as a battalion chief.

There was lots of appreciation shown by the public. And Governor Schwarzenegger expressed his appreciation at a press conference in LA at Griffith Park. His comments can be read and heard by clicking below. CAL FIRE also played a significant role in the positive outcome of the Griffith Park fire in the City of Los Angeles. We sent air resources, crew strike teams, as well as having pre-positioned a strike team of type III engines based on weather conditions. I spoke to LA City Fire Chief Doug Barry who expressed his appreciation for that foresight and planning.

➤ [Governor Schwarzenegger comments at Griffith Park](#)

Finally, Dan Dunmoyer, the Governor's Cabinet Secretary, Mike Chrisman, Resources Agency Secretary, and Susan Kennedy, the Governor's Chief of Staff all expressed their appreciation to all of you for a job well done! The Governor has directed Secretary Chrisman to assist the City of Los Angeles with the recovery process for Griffith Park. CAL FIRE Resource Management staff have begun that process with the City of Los Angeles.

You all make me proud to work with you! Keep up the great work!

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Grijalva'.

Ruben Grijalva, Chief
Director